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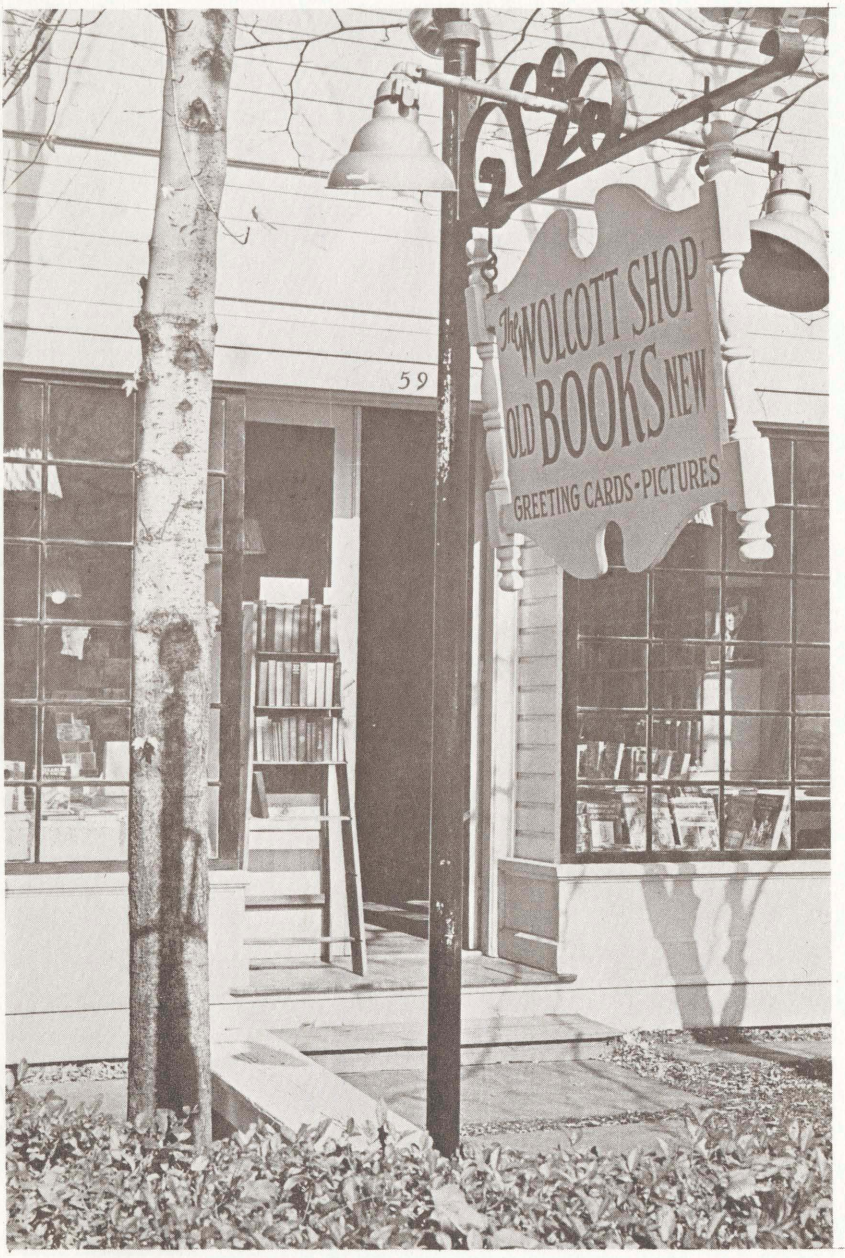

The Old Bookshop, Skaneateles, New York

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Harriet Martineau
Photograph Courtesy New-York Historical Society

A Retrospect of "Western" Travel: 1834-1836

by Elise Linn Prentis

In August, 1834, a most extraordinary and yet, in some ways, quite ordinary Englishwoman named Harriet Martineau set sail for the United States where she intended to travel for two years. Thirty-two years old and already famous on both sides of the Atlantic, she was, in her own phrase, "Lafayetted" wherever she went. Famous statesmen hastened to call on her, six carriages were placed at her disposal, hostesses vied for her presence at social events. But one year later, in August of 1835, a spontaneous and courageous action on her part caused the doors which had been open to her to be abruptly slammed shut.

Her extensive peregrinations were recorded in two books, *Society in America* and *Retrospect of Western Travel. Society in America* is a peculiar book in which she attempted to take the Declaration of Independence as her yardstick and to measure against it institutions in the United States as she actually found them. The results are highly theoretical, disorganized, and except for certain flashes of insight, virtually unreadable today. *Retrospect of Western Travel* which she herself says she wrote hurriedly, is a straight travel book and, probably because it was a less serious endeavor, it has a quality of ad lib freshness, particularly in the first volume.

In *Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian,* R. K. Webb has dealt extensively with the socio-political aspects of *Society in America,* but Harriet Martineau's actual travel experiences in America have failed to interest her biographers. Her travels would have been remarkable for anyone in that era. They were particularly remarkable for an Englishwoman who was almost stone deaf and who, for long periods in her life, suffered from extremely poor health.

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Elise Linn Prentis *is a free lance writer with a special interest in nineteenth century United States history and the relationship between France and the United States. She attended the Syracuse University School of Information Studies.*

Harriet Martineau was born in Norwich, England, in 1802, the sixth child of Thomas and Elizabeth Martineau, of Huguenot descent. Her father was a manufacturer of bombasine, a heavy silk twill fabric which was almost impervious to wear and hence dear to the hearts of Victorian dressmakers. Unitarian by religion, the family had its roots solidly in the English middle class which supplied so much of the substrata of the Victorian literary tradition.

Like most Victorian childhoods, hers was unhappy. She suffered from irrational fears, indigestion, and an unsympathetic mother. The only thing which was unusual about all this was her growing deafness. By the time she was fourteen she was convinced that she would eventually have to make use of an ear trumpet. This felicitous instrument was to become so much a part of her personality that by the time of her trip to America one gentleman in Cincinnati went so far as to write a sonnet on it.

In the introduction to *Society in America* she states:

> I laboured under only one peculiar disadvantage that I am aware of; but that one is incalculable. I mean my deafness. This does not endanger the accuracy of my information, I believe, as far as it goes; because I carry a trumpet of remarkable fidelity; an instrument, moreover, which seems to exert some winning power, by which I gain more in tête-a-têtes than is given to people who hear general conversation. Probably its charm consists in the new feeling which it imparts of ease and privacy in conversing with a deaf person.[1]

Her formal education was desultory, consisting of two years' attendance at a mixed grammar school and a year and a half's study in Bristol under a well-known Unitarian clergyman.

Between 1823 and 1826 she had a passing romance with a young clergyman who was subsequently to suffer a mental collapse and die. During this period her father's fortunes began to fail in the depressions following the Napoleonic Wars, and, encouraged by her brother James, she had begun to write. Her first works were largely devotional and not very successful outside the family circle.

The books which she published only after the gravest difficulties and disappointments, but which were to make her famous, were her *Illustrations of Political Economy.* In two and a half years, she produced three series of tales on political economy, on taxation, and on the Poor Laws . . .in all, thirty-four volumes. Each of these stories was intended to illustrate a well-known economic fact or theory. By today's standards they were full of propaganda and moralizing, but they met a current need and they were eagerly read.

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[1]Harriet Martineau, *Society in America,* London, Saunders and Otley, 1938, Vol.I p. XVIII.

In an article in *Colophon,* Earnest Calkins states:

> Today it is hard to understand the success of these little books, for their success was beyond dispute. The sales reached ten thousand. They were translated into most European languages; Queen Adelaide was graciously pleased, and the Earl of Durham made the Princess Victoria read the whole lot, to the acquiring of ideas which later influenced her reign.[2]

She was immediately lionized. She enjoyed the attention but she was still furiously producing her books and the demands on her time were often onerous. "I had," she observes, "an immense acquaintance, no carriage, and no time."

She had also become politically influential. Cabinet ministers and the Lord Chancellor himself came to her for advice about various measures they were preparing. It was all very heady to be a sort of nineteenth century Dorothy Thompson, but it was also exhausting. Like Dorothy Thompson a hundred years later, she had an innate ability to meet and mingle with the most notable men and women of her time. She never had to go to them, they came to her.

When the series on *Political Economy* was finished, she decided to take a long holiday. She originally planned to journey through Italy and Switzerland, but Lord Henley, a relative of the Lord Chancellor, suggested that she visit America instead:

> "Whatever else may or may not be true about the Americans," he said to her, "it is certain that they have got at principles of justice and mercy in their treatment of the least happy classes of society that we should do well to understand. Will you not go, and tell us what they are?"[3]

So eloquent a plea could hardly be resisted by a nature that was both curious and quietly militant, and so, in August of 1834, she went.

* * * * *

In the opening paragraph of his chapter on Harriet Martineau in America, R.K. Webb gives the following explanation of the British interest in America during this period.

> As Western observers streamed to Russia in the twenties and thirties of this century, so European observers traveled to the United States in the nineteenth century. They went to see a great experiment in action, and, as in the parallel case a century later, their intentions and conclusions were determined less by the

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[2]Earnest Elmo Calkins, "Harriet Martineau; Deaf Blue-Stocking," *Colophon*, New York, c 1933, pt. 14, no. 2.

[3]John Cranstoun Nevill, *Harriet Martineau*, London, F. Muller, Ltd., 1943, p. 64.

country they visited than by their hopes and fears for society at home. The literature of nineteenth-century travel in America is immense, and almost without exception it angered the Americans. Americans, then as now, were painfully concerned about what the rest of the world thought about them, and the visitors seemed condescending, hasty, stuffy, malicious, prejudiced, or blind.[4]

The British came expecting to find an England in macrocosm and when they found something quite different they felt surprised and rebuffed. Small differences in custom and manners which would have been passed off graciously in Persia, say, or the Far East, seemed ridiculously irritating in a people so newly evolved from the mother country.

The general offense was, of course, the egalitarian tone of American manners, the absence of domestic help except in the south, and the complete lack of subservience everywhere.

But the small things seemed to be even more annoying. Chief among these was the ubiquitous American habit of chewing tobacco and spitting out the juice. Spitting was no respecter of classes. Congressman spat, judges spat, as well as stagecoach drivers and the ordinary fellow guests at one's hotel. Washington dignitaries spat into marble fireplaces, commercial travelers spat on the decks of river steamboats: it was all one and the same, a sort of national disease.

Miss Martineau, usually tolerant, was adamant in this case:

I will say nothing but the practice is at too bad a pass to leave hope that anything that could be said in books would work a cure. If the floors of boarding houses, and decks of steamboats and the carpets of the Capitol do not sicken the Americans into a reform; if the warnings of physicians are of no avail. what remains to be said?[5]

Another foible of American life which grated on Miss Martineau's nerves was the rocking chair.

In these small inns the disagreeable practice of rocking in the chair is seen in its excess. In the inn parlour are three or four rocking-chairs, in which sit ladies who are vibrating in different directions, and at various velocities, so as to try the head of a stranger almost as severely as the tobacco-chewer his stomach. How this lazy and ungraceful indulgence ever became general I cannot imagine; but the nation seems so wedded to it, I see little chance of its being forsaken. When American ladies come to live in Europe they frequently send home for a rocking cnair . . .It is

[4]R. K. Webb, *Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian,* New York, Columbia University Press, 1960, p. 134.

[5]Martineau, *Society in America,* Vol. II, p. 200.

well that the gentleman can be satisfied to sit still, or the world might be treated with the spectacle of the sublime American Senate in a new position; its fifty-two senators see-sawing in full deliberation, like the wise birds of a rookery in a breeze.[6]

Such habits were petty annoyances. The burning issue which really aroused the sympathies and concern of the English, was, of course, slavery. This curious anomaly of a large servile class in the midst of a population whose most cherished ideas had to do with freedom and equality, interested and puzzled the foreigner, and set him to wondering just what the outcome would be. A great deal was said and written about slavery in these years; no one seems to have taken it lightly, though the question had by no means assumed the menacing proportions that it assumed a few years later.

It is difficult for anyone who has not studied the period to realize that there were only a handful of abolitionists in the United States at this time and these were regarded as dangerous crackpots. They were subject to all sorts of indignities from the better as well as the lower orders of society as Harriet was to witness.

Unsure of her reception as an Englishwoman, Harriet thought the Americans might think it ostentatious of her to travel with a maid. However, because of her deafness, she felt she should have some companion. A solution was found in the person of Miss Louisa Jeffrey, a lady of "superior qualifications," anxious to travel but not rich enough to do so. In return for her expenses she agreed to go along as companion and to take care of the business arrangements of the trip. Of all the personages to be encountered on this safari, none remains so shadowy as Miss Jeffrey. She was apparently a paragon of every virtue, but no one has any more to say than that. She was to return home before the end of the two years without any ill feelings on either side.

> The moment of first landing in a foreign city is commonly spoken of as a perfect realization of forlorness. My entrance upon American life was anything but this. The spirits of my companions and myself were in a holy-day dance while we were receiving our first impressions; and New York always afterward bore an air of gayety to me from the association of the early pleasures of foreign travel.
>
> Apartments had been secured for us at a boarding-house in Broadway, and a hackney-coach was in waiting at the wharf. The moonlight was flickering through the trees of the Battery, the insects were buzzing all about us, the catydids were grinding, and all the sounds, except human voices, were quite unlike all we had heard for six weeks. [7]

[6]Harriet Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel,* London, Saunders and Otley, New York, Harper Brothers, 1838, Vol. I, p. 72.

[7]*Ibid.,* p. 35-36.

This is Harriet at her best and liveliest, quite the opposite of the weighty political thinker of *Society in America.*

On her first walk down Broadway she was so busy looking around she was nearly run down by the fire-engines. Fires in New York were a nightly, or for that matter, daily affair. Captain Basil Hall, traveling in 1827, was so appalled that he asked the city of Edinburgh to send the city of New York a recently invented trough-like apparatus by which a stream of water could be sent directly at the flames. On May 10, 1834, the following "Notice to Firemen" was issued:

> The large bell on the City Hall has, under the direction of the committee of Public Buildings and Repairs, been so fixed that it will be rung for fires, and the city laid out, or divided into districts for the purpose of informing firemen of the direction of the fires.[8]

She was to witness the great New York fire of December 16, 1835, which destroyed nearly seven hundred houses in seventeen blocks, mainly large shipping and wholesale drygoods and grocery houses. It was the section which contained the banks, the stock exchange, and the post office, the very heart of the city.

She went to the Unitarian Church in Chamber Street where she was greatly impressed by the devotional part of the service. When it was over, the minister came down from his pulpit, addressed her as an old friend and, since he was a guest pastor and not from New York City, requested her to accept the hospitality of his home when she should visit Philadelphia. It was typical of the reception she was to meet everywhere she went. People simply couldn't do enough for her.

She was soon receiving distinguished visitors such as General Mason, the father of the young governor of Michigan, and Governor Cass, then Secretary of War. The man who impressed her most was Albert Gallatin, who as the first Secretary of the Treasury was largely responsible for the monetary structure of the United States. A native of Switzerland who had served extensively abroad, he was able to speak from a European as well as an American point of view. He was the ideal person to provide Miss Martineau with background information on a number of wide-reaching subjects which interested her.

On an excursion to an estate at "High Wood" two miles beyond Hoboken, she was shown the spot where Hamilton had fought his fatal duel with Aaron Burr. This provoked some reflections on dueling, a subject she was to return to when she visited New Orleans.

The chapter closes with one of the few criticisms of British manners to be found in all the vast bulk of travelers' reports of the period.

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[8] I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909,* VI Vols., New York, Amos Press, 1967, Vol. V, p. 1727.

> One of the first impressions of a foreigner in New York is of the extreme insolence and vulgarity of certain young Englishmen, who thus make themselves very conspicuous. Well-mannered Englishmen are scarcely distinguishable from the natives, and thus escape observation; while every commercial traveller who sneers at republicanism all day long, and every impertinent boy, leaving home for the first time, with no understanding or sympathy for anything but what he has been accustomed to see at home, obtrudes himself upon the notice, and challenges the congeniality of such countrymen and countrywomen as he can contrive to put himself in the way of.[9]

The other side of the coin.

It is difficult to establish the exact chronology of Harriet's travels because she contradicted herself slightly between the introduction to *Society in America* and *Retrospect of Western Travel.* This is further complicated by a chronology published by William Seat in 1959.[10] This is in error in at least one respect when he states that she did not meet Dr. Hosack until 1835. Dr. Hosack died in December of 1835 just after the great New York fire. Since Harriet refers to his death as having taken place sometime after her stay at his estate at Hyde Park, it is almost incontrovertible that she met him when she says she did, on her first trip up the Hudson in the early fall of 1834.

> Everyone rhapsodized over the Hudson and Harriet is no exception. I went three times up the Hudson; and, if I lived at New York, should be tempted to ascend it three times a week during summer. Yet the greater number of ladies on board the steamboat remained in the close cabin among the crying babies, even while we were passing the finest scenery of the river. They do not share the taste of a gentleman who, when I was there, actually made the steamboat his place of abode during the entire summer season, sleeping on board at Albany and New York on alternate nights, and gazing at the shores all the day long with apparently undiminishing delight.[11]

At West Point she had one of her most intriguing encounters. She had gotten up early in the morning and walked down to Kosciusko's Garden. Kosciusko was, of course, General Kosciusko, the Polish patriot who served with such distinction during the revolution. The garden had been his favourite retreat. Here she stayed for some time, thinking herself alone, until she chanced to meet a solitary cadet coming down the steps. The cadet accosted

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[9] Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel,* Vol. I, p. 42.

[10] William Seat, Jr., "Harriet Martineau in America," *Notes and Queries,* 1959, 204:6, p. 207-208.

[11] Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel,* Vol. I, p. 43.

her and offered to show her the points of interest of the Academy. "We had," she says, "a long conversation about his academical life." It paints a rather charming picture, this chance encounter between an English lady with an ear trumpet, and a lone cadet, at five in the morning. Among the sights he showed her was the library which at this time was housed on the third floor of one of the older buildings. It consisted of several thousand volumes mostly on military history and engineering. (The building was destroyed by fire in 1838, but the cadets managed to carry out most of the books.)[12]

After Harriet had ferreted out every detail of the administrative and daily life of the Academy, they engaged in a dialogue on the ill-use of tobacco. The cadet admitted that it had "extensively and irreparably injured his health." Harriet asked him if he did not mean to leave it off. He replied that he did not, as it would take him three weeks to cure himself, and he could not learn his lessons without it. Tobacco in one form or another seems to be a problem as old as the United States itself.

Aboard the boat, which unfortunately she never described, she found that Mr. Edward Livingston was one of the passengers. Her letters of introduction were at the bottom of her trunk, but they did not hesitate to make themselves known to each other. Mr. Livingston, of one of the great Hudson River families, had served several terms in Congress, as Secretary of State in 1831, and as Minister to France in 1833. However, the achievement which most recommended him to Miss Martineau was his reform of the Louisiana penal laws into the famous Louisiana Code. Prison reform was, as we shall see, one of Harriet's pet hobbyhorses. They were seated on the top deck, deep in a discussion of the government of Louis Philippe when a great hissing of steam made them look up to see that they were at Hyde Park and Dr. Hosack and a party of ladies were waiting on the wharf.

Dr. Hosack was another one of the remarkable characters of the period, combining the practice and teaching of medicine with a deep interest in botany. He had occupied the chairs of both Botany and Materia Medica at Columbia College. He had also had the sad honour of acting as Hamilton's second at the time of his fatal duel with Aaron Burr. Dr. Hosack had married a wealthy widow and her fortune enabled him to buy a seven hundred acre estate at Hyde Park. He made extensive changes and additions to the house which included an extra wing to house his library. The library numbered between four and five thousand volumes, many of them autographed presentation copies.[13] Good private libraries were extremely rare in the United States at this time, the era of the great private collectors was yet to come. English visitors usually commented on the poor reading habits of the Americans, which they attributed, as usual, to the national preoccupation with making money.

[12]Letter from Egon A. Weiss, Librarian, United States Military Academy at West Point, February 19, 1967.

[13]Christine Chapman Robbins, *David Hosack: Citizen of New York,* Philadelphia, The American Philosophical Society, 1964, p. 177.

After an enjoyable visit with the hospitable Dr. Hosack, Miss Martineau and Miss Jeffrey spent a few days at Pine Orchard House near Catskill, high in the mountains, commanding an unsurpassed view of the river. Pine Orchard House was typical of the hotels which were being built during this period, spacious by European standards because of the plentiful supply of lumber but often lacking in the amenities to which the foreign traveler was accustomed. They were situated, not as the old frontier taverns were situated, on the main avenues of travel, but near spots of scenic beauty where the visitor could be expected to linger for days or even weeks.

After this she left New York State to pay a visit to the Sedgewick family in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Catherine Sedgewick was a prominent novelist of the period and she and Harriet became great friends, a friendship to be marred after Harriet's return to England when she made a rather unfortunate comment about Miss Sedgewick's writing.

She had previously arranged to meet with a party of shipmates at Albany, for the purpose of, as she put it, "traversing the State of New York."

New York State in the 1830's was in a ferment of rapid transition and change. The successful conclusion of the War of 1812 had made the interior once more safe for settlers and new towns were springing up literally out of the forest in the central and western portion of the state. The famous Genesee road which still survives in the Genesee Street of several cities such as Utica and Syracuse, was built westward from Fort Schuyler, or Utica, in 1794 and was extended to Buffalo in 1798. The usefulness of this road, which at its best was very poor, was much diminished by the building of the Erie Canal. So cheaply was freight carried and so popular was canal travel that by 1836, the waterway had turned into the state treasury more than its costs. Few British visitors escaped a stretch on a canal boat, and most, including the usually intrepid Miss Martineau, made unfavorable remarks.

Before leaving Albany she had an interview with Mr. Van Buren, with whom she was not impressed, and visited the Van Rensselaer Manor House of 1765, erected by Stephen Van Rensselaer, II, third Lord of the Manor. (In 1893 it was removed to the campus of Williams College.)[14] After barely a glimpse of the shrubbery, she returned to breakfast and then proceeded by railroad to Schenectady. The line from Albany to Schenectady was the first railroad to be completed in New York State. At Schenectady Miss Martineau and her shipmates immediately stepped into a canalboat for Utica.

It is typical of her eclectic taste in people that her party aboard ship consisted of a German and a Dutch gentleman, a Prussian physician and a young South Carolinian. Usually, English travelers traveled only with other English travelers. At the Congress Hall Hotel in Albany on October 6, before starting the trip, they had agreed to a division of labor among gentlemen: one to arrange lodgings, one to take care of the eating department, one to pay the

[14]Codman Hislop, *Albany, Dutch, English, and American,* Albany, Argus Press, 1936, p. 163.

bills, and one to take care of the luggage. Each was adorned with an appropriate badge of office, a corncob, a bankbill, etc. It is hard to believe that the Victorians had their lighter moments, but they did.

In addition to dirt, noise, low bridges, etc., aboard the canal boat, Miss Martineau and her party were subjected to another annoyance in the form of sixteen Presbyterian clergymen.

> These sixteen gentlemen, on their way to a Convention at Utica, could not wait til they got there to begin their devotional observances, but obtruded them upon the passengers in a most unjustifiable manner. They were not satisfied with saying an almost interminable grace before and after each meal, but shut up the cabin for prayers before dinner; for missionary conversation in the afternoon, and for scripture reading and prayers quite late into the night, keeping tired travellers from their rest, and everyone from his fair allowance of fresh air.[15]

This was a far from unusual occurence. Many English travelers complained of the ignorance and bigotry of the clergymen who forced themselves upon their acquaintance.

Utica, she thought the most "extempore" place she had yet seen, looking as though it had "sprung up out of some sudden need." After a night at Bagg's hotel they were able to secure a neat, clean stage to take them to Trenton Falls, a distance of fourteen miles.

Throughout most of the Nineteenth Century the falls at Trenton were considered second only to Niagara in scenic importance and few foreign travelers missed them.

"We clapped our hands at the sight of the 'Rural Retreat,' the comfortable, hospitable house of entertainment at Trenton, standing in its garden on the edge of the forest, so unlike hotels on the high road."

It is no wonder that she found the "Rural Retreat" hospitable. It was built and owned by John Sherman, pastor of the first Unitarian church to be built in New York State, at Olden-Barneveld. Since she was an ardent Unitarian she must have indeed been in a congenial atmosphere and much regretted having to leave early the next morning for Syracuse.

The falls she described so extensively that it is possible to quote only in part:

> From the edge of the ravine the black water, speckled with white foam, is seen rushing below with a swiftness which already half turns the head of the stranger. We descended five flights of wooden steps fixed against the steep face of the rock, and at the bottom found ourselves at the brink of the torrent. I never was in so dark and chill a place in the open air; yet the sun was shining

[15] Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel,* Vol. I, p. 77,78.

> on the opposite face of the rock, lighting the one scarlet maple which stood out from among the black cedars and dark green elms.[16]

Even today, marred by a series of dams, the Trenton gorge retains much of the wild beauty which bemused visitors a century or more ago.

Returning to Utica, they engaged an "exclusive extra" to carry them to Buffalo for eighty dollars. The "exclusive extra" was simply a coach hired to be at the convenience of one particular party. They reached Syracuse just after dark, in time for the common supper. Miss Martineau was surprised at the size and style of the hotel, undoubtedly the Mansion House at the northwest corner of West Genesee and North Salina Streets.[17]

> Land and building material being cheap, and there being no window tax, there is little inducement to economize space in the American houses, and the new hotels have the ambitious air which is given by spaciousness. The deficiency lies in furniture, and yet more in attendance; but I really think, that if travellers will trouble themselves to learn a little the ways of the house, so as not to run into opposition to other people's convenience, much more comfort may be enjoyed in these places than unaccommodating tourists will believe. Our chambers were quite sufficiently furnished here; and I never in any place found difficulty in obtaining as large a supply of water as I wished by simply asking for it in good time.[18]

She commented on the panoramic wall papers to be found in hotel parlours in various parts of the country, often defaced by scribbled speeches put into the mouths of painted personages, a sort of precursor of the comic strip.

Like many another visitor to this part of upstate New York, she was appalled by the neo-classic place names, "Syracuse in the State of New York!" indeed.

The party proceeded to Skaneateles and then to the village of Geneva which she found particularly captivating.

> A long row of handsome white and red houses, each with its sloping garden, fronts the lake; and behind the dwellings the road is bordered with locust-trees, which seem to embower the place. The gardens are more carefully cultivated then is at all common in America and they well repay the trouble bestowed on them. There is a college standing on high ground above the lake, to

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

[17] Franklin H. Chase, *Syracuse and Its Environs,* New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1924, Vol. I, p. 302.

[18] Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel,* Vol. I, p. 83.

which a natural lawn descends from the open space in front of the building.[19]

The college is Hobart, its buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

Canandaigua, like Geneva, was a pretty village noted for its good society. However, she had a rather gruesome tale to tell in connection with Canandaigua and Batavia in her book, *Society in America.* A certain Captain William Morgan, a southern gentleman down on his luck, had come to Batavia. He joined the Masonic lodge in the neighboring town of Le Roy and began to rise in the Masonic hierarchy. However, when he and some others signed a petition to obtain a Masonic charter for the town of Batavia he received a sharp rebuff and his name was dropped from the petition.

Enraged, he and a friend who published the *Batavia Advocate* decided to expose the secrets of Masonry. Reaction was swift and violent. About forty masked men converged on the printing offices and set them on fire. Morgan continued his attacks on the Masons and he was arrested on the charge of stealing a shirt. After his arrest he was removed to the town of Canandaigua where the additional charge was placed against him that he had not paid his hotel bill on a previous visit. In the middle of the night three men came to the back door of the jail and offered to pay his fine and his indebtedness in order to secure his release.

Outside the jail a yellow coach waited, heavily curtained. Morgan was forced inside and the coach set off at a brisk pace for Rochester. Here, a black coach and a fresh team of horses was waiting. So it continued all the way to the Canadian border, one hundred thirty miles away. Here Morgan was rowed across the Niagara river, where some Canadian Masons were presumably waiting to receive him on the other side. However, a disagreement ensued and he was rowed back again. He was kept a prisoner in the powder magazine at Fort Niagara. His eventual fate was unknown but it was presumed that his throat was cut, his body heavily weighted and dropped into the deepest part of the river.

The whole story of the murder, plus the exposé was published in a contemporary pamphlet and later found its way into Carl Carmer's *Listen for a Lonesome Drum* under the title "The Curtained Carriage."

After the travelers left Batavia they found themselves on the first piece of corduroy road that they had encountered in the country. Harriet took pains here to convince her readers that not all American roads were corduroy. The Ridge Road, running parallel with part of Lake Ontario, she pronounced excellent, one of the best in the states.

> We issued from the corduroy road upon one on which we could easily have performed twelve miles an hour. Houses with porches of Ionic pillars began to be scattered by the roadside. We were

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Harriet Marineau at Home
Photograph Courtesy New-York Historical Society

> deviously approaching Buffalo. Soon the lake was visible and then we entered the long main street and stopped at the entrance of the Eagle hotel.[20]

She did not like Buffalo which she considered a way station for all sorts of undesirable elements: runaway slaves and pursuing owners, Indian traders, land speculators, poor immigrants and debased Indians.

With another lady who was a good walker, she went on a ramble to Fort Erie. The fort was blown up by the last of its defenders during the War of 1812 and only the ruins remained.

Anyone who has read more than one or two traveler's reports of this period views the approach to Niagara with trepidation, knowing he will be subjected to an avalanche of adjectives more thunderous than the waters. Harriet was well aware of this and made a rule that "no one should ask an opinion of the spectacle for twenty-four hours."

She explored the falls with the same thoroughness and derring-do she had shown in the Trenton gorge. She was to return in 1836 with a party of abolitionist friends and to spend a delightful day "dawdling" about Goat Island.

After Niagara she left New York State for Northumberland, Pennsylvania where she wished to visit the final refuge of Joseph Priestly the Unitarian minister who was driven out of England when an angry mob demolished his house, church, and laboratory. He was one of Harriet's life-long heroes.

The Victorians traveled not only to see the scenery, but to visit institutions of all kinds and a high priority was given to prisons. The prison at Auburn, New York was receiving international attention at this time because of its introduction of the so-called "silent system." Each prisoner was placed in solitary confinement and although they worked together they were not allowed to communicate in any way. Harriet was disappointed in the Auburn prison not only because the cells were ill-ventilated, but because the prisoners did, indeed, manage to communicate through the air-pipes and by speaking behind their teeth without moving their lips. This, she considered not conducive to true reformation.

She was much more pleased with the system employed at the Philadelphia prison, commonly known as "Cherry Hill."

> On his entrance the convict is taken to the bathroom, where he is well cleansed, and his state of health examined into and recorded by the physician and warden. A hood is then put over his head, and he is led to his apartment. I never met one who could in the least tell what the form of the central part of the prison was, or which radii his cell was placed in, though they make very

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 89-90.

> accurate observations of the times at which the sun shines in. At the end of two days during which the convict has neither book nor work, the warden visits him, and has a conversation with him about the mode of life in the institution. If he asks for work, he is offered a choice of three or four kinds, of which weaving and shoemaking are the chief.[21]

(Charles Dickens, visited this same institution ten years later and was horrified. He painted a pathetic picture of the bleak despair of the prisoners who frequently lost their hearing and their power of speech after long periods of incarceration.)[22]

After her visit to Northumberland she spent six weeks in Philadelphia, three weeks in Baltimore, five weeks in Washington, then to Montpelier to see Madison, to Charlottesville to see the University of Virginia, to Richmond, and, after a nine-day journey, to Charleston, South Carolina. She crossed the deep South: Columbia, Augusta, Montgomery, Mobile, New Orleans, steamed up the Mississippi, visited Mammoth Cave, and stayed three weeks at Lexington, Kentucky. Ten days in Cincinnati impressed her very deeply. Another steamboat trip on the Ohio took her back to White Sulphur Springs and Natural Bridge, Virgina. She returned to New York in mid-July, 1835.

All through her travels her apprehensions about the slavery issue had been deepening, although she was careful about expressing her opinions. She and Miss Jeffrey chanced to be passing through Boston the day William Lloyd Garrison, the abolitionist, was dragged through the streets by a mob and very nearly tarred and feathered. Then on August 18, 1835, she was asked to attend a meeting of the Ladies Anti-Slavery Society in Boston. She had been warned that there might be physical violence, which, needless to state, deterred her not one whit, but she was unpleasantly surprised when she was asked to speak, as she had not yet committed herself. What she said was mild enough, merely that she felt slavery to be inconsistent with God's law and that she was fully in agreement with the abolitionists' principles. It was enough. For three weeks nothing happened, then she was attacked in the newspapers, first in New York and then in Boston. Doors slammed shut. She was reduced more and more to the company of her abolitionist friends, the Follens and the Lorings. Dr. Follen was an exiled German reformer who had been dismissed from his post as a lecturer at Harvard because of his abolitionist sympathies. The Ellis Lorings had asked her to the meeting in the first place.

In the spring of 1836, she paid a visit to Saratoga, Glens Falls and Lake George, arriving at Saratoga by railcar in May. She was not overly impressed

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[21] *Ibid.*, p. 128.

[22] Charles Dickens, *American Notes and Pictures from Italy*, London, Oxford University Press, 1966, Chapter VII.

by Saratoga with its large hotels, mostly empty, since it was early in the season. However, she showed a lively interest in the process of bottling Congress water.

She was astonished at the splendour of Glens Falls.

> The full, though narrow Hudson, rushes along amid enormous masses of rock, and leaps sixty feet down the chasms and precipices which occur in the passage sweeping between dark banks of shelving rocks below, its current speckled with foam. The noise is so tremendous that I cannot conceive how people can fix their dwellings in the immediate neighborhood.[23]

She remarked on the fine black marble of the place which was cut into slabs and sent down to New York to be polished. It was the busiest scene of water power she had encountered in America.

Arriving at Lake George, she and her party spent the morning exploring the ground around Fort William Henry. Like Fort Erie, the fort itself was nothing but an insignificant heap of ruins but it had been the scene of a seige and a bloody massacre during the French and Indian Wars.

The next two days were spent in exploring the lake, on foot, on ponies, and finally by boat. Of Tea Island, she remarked that she wished it had a better name "for it is a delicious spot, just big enough for a very lazy hermit to live in."

She concluded by saying that she hoped the members of her party would be spared to visit Lake George again. Though she herself could hardly hope to do so, "the time will never come when my memory will not be occasionally treated with some flitting image of Lake George."

She continued West through the Mohawk Valley to visit Niagara for the second time, then to Detroit and Chicago, and on the lakes by way of Mackinaw to Cleveland. Her last journey was through the interior of Ohio – unaccountably missing Oberlin College for which she expressed so great an admiration – to the Rappite settlement of Economy, and through Pennsylvania to New York.

We catch one last glimpse of her from a passage in Philip Hone's diary. Philip Hone was a *bon vivant* who had made a fortune early in life and settled back to enjoy it. Like Dr. Hosack, he made a point of entertaining distinguished foreign visitors. He had served as mayor of New York in 1827 and his extremely detailed diary provides the principle source material for the period between 1828 and 1851.

Of Miss Martineau he wrote:

> I was apprehensive, from her high literary reputation, that I should find her a little too blue to be agreeable. But it is not at all the case; she is pleasant and unaffected, has great vivacity, talks

[23]Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel,* Vol. II, p. 233.

> well upon all subjects, and is fond of laughing; with these qualifications she is, of course, an engaging companion. The only difficulty in conversing with her arises from her great deafness, which is obviated (at least, so far as one speaker at a time is concerned) by the use of a trumpet formed of a tube of gum-elastic, one end of which she places in her right ear, while the mouth of the person conversing with her is applied to the other.[24]

On August 1, 1836, she sailed for England.

Harriet always insisted that she had no intention of writing a book about her American experiences. Nobody believed her, it is doubtful that she believed herself.

On her return to England she was besieged by publishers but refused to make any commitments until after a round of family visits. She agreed on terms with Saunders and Otley, and *Society in America* was published in 1838. Soon after its appearance, her publisher asked for a lighter book and she obliged with *Retrospect of Western Travel.*

Society in America was heavy-going even by contemporary standards. Some of her friends – notably Sydney Smith and Carlyle – refrained from criticism until the second book appeared, and then her own good sense told her their praise of the one was a condemnation of the other. Carlyle said he had rather read of Webster's cavernous eyes and arm under his coattail, than all the political speculation in the world.[25]

The post from this side of the Atlantic was condemnatory as might be expected, but she felt it her duty to receive and read the letters even when they were weighted with stones in order to force her to pay extra postage.

Her interest in America continued until her death in 1876. Unfortunately, she had come to consider herself something of an authority, and as the Civil War approached, she wrote long letters to her friends in the United States full of admonitions and advice. She began to assume the status of a garrulous great-aunt with a horde of unruly nephews and nieces who are devoted to her but try to avoid her.

Her literary reputation was irretrievably marred by her own productivity. Even she could not remember what she had written or when. No subject was too simple or too abstruse. She brought to her *Two Letters on Cow Keeping* the same enthusiasm with which she undertook the translation and interpretation of Auguste Comte. In middle life she requested that all her personal correspondence be destroyed. Doubtless, she did not want to be

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[24] *Philip Hone's Diary, 1828-1851,* ed. with an introduction by Bayard Tuckerman, New York, Dodd Mead, 1889, Vol. I, p. 206.

[25] Vera Wheatley, *The Life and Work of Harriet Martineau,* London, Secker and Warburg, 1957, p. 179.

challenged at seventy with what she had said and thought when she was thirty. She also wished her final estimate of herself to appear in her *Autobiography,* to be published the year after her death. The *Autobiography* is sometimes inconsistent and is further spoiled by the eulogies of her American friend, Maria Weston Chapman.

Harriet was not infallible. In her chapter on prisons, for example, she unwittingly endorses a system of the most refined cruelty. Still, she was more often right than wrong, and she approached the new world with tolerance and freshness of viewpoint. *Society in America* will remain a rather heavy-handed portrait in oils of American institutions, but *Retrospect of Western Travel* retains the immediacy of a good water-colour sketch in which she captures the colours of the United States as she found it and as it very likely was.

Works by Harriet Martineau in the Syracuse University Libraries

Biographical Sketches. New York, Leypoldt and Holt, 1869.

Dawn Island. A Tale. Manchester, J. Gadspy, 1845.

The Faith as Unfolded by Many Prophets: An Essay Addressed to the Disciples of Mohammed. Boston, L. C. Bowles, 1833.

Geschichte England's Wahrend des Dreissigjahrigen Friedens von 1816 bis 1846. . .Aus dem Englischen Ubersetzt von Carl Julius Bergius. Berlin, Duncker, 1853.

Harriet Martineau's Autobiography. Edited by Maria Weston Chapman. 4th ed. Boston, Houghton, Osgood, 1879.

The History of England During the Thirty Years Peace: 1816-1846. London, G. Knight, 1849-51.

History of the Peace: Being a History of England from 1816 to 1854. With an Introduction 1800-1815. Boston, Walker, Wise and Co., 1864-66.

Household Education. London, E. Maxon, 1849.

Household Education. Philadelphia, Lea and Blanchard, 1849.

Illustrations of Political Economy. Boston, L. C. Bowles, 1832. 12 Vol.

Miscellanies. Boston, Hilliard, Gray, 1836.

The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte. Freely Translated and Condensed by Harriet Martineau. New York, D. Appleton, 1854.

Retrospect of Western Travel. London, Saunders and Otley. New York, Harper Brothers, 1838. 2 Vol. (Vol. 2 wanting)

Retrospect of Western Travel. New York, Greenwood Press, 1969. Reprint of 1838 edition. 3 Vol.

Society in America. London, Saunders and Otley, 1838. 3 Vol. (Vol. 2, 3 wanting)

FROM THE COLLECTOR'S LIBRARY

Tales From a Village Bookshop

by Roderick Benton

Skaneateles is an upstate New York village situated at the tip of one of the Finger Lakes from which it gets its name. It is far enough away from the city of Syracuse to keep its identity, rather than being mistaken for a suburb. There are always plenty of summer residents who need to buy books to read on rainy days, to say nothing of the regular residents who have to pass the time during snowy upstate winters on the lake.

The Wolcott Shop in Skaneateles which we owned for many years was just the place to buy leisure reading, stocked as it was with books for all ages and interests. But it was more than that. It was a book-collector's bookstore.

The visitor would probably find our cat sunning herself decoratively in the window, perhaps minding the store while I was away on a brief errand to the post office. Most of the customers spoke to the cat in flattering endearments, but the regular customer could count on having a conversation with someone there, especially if he were a book collector.

One regular visitor was Mr. Henry Bannister who stopped in on his visits to our village. He was and is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable bookman and has formed a superb collection of his own. Sometimes Mrs. Bannister came with him and she, too, knows books. She believed then, as now, that our central New York school libraries should promote books on local history and folklore. We were able to find for her many of these books, such as Walter Edmonds's *Rome Haul, The Big Barn, Erie Water, Mostly Canallers,* and *Drums Along the Mohawk*; also Carl Carmer's *Genesee Fever*; and Constance Robertsons's *Nine Mile Swamp* and *Muller Hill.* This list should include two great books by Dr. Clarke of Utica, *Emigrés in the Wilderness* and *The Bloody Mohawk,* and the early historical novels of Robert W. Chambers, and *The Man in the Grey Cloak* by Harold MacGrath of Syracuse.

Mr. John Mayfield was a mail-order customer of ours long before he came to Syracuse and presented his million dollar library to the University. How lucky we are to have a book collector of his calibre in our community! If a bibliographical problem arose, a call from the shop to Mr. Mayfield would

always supply the information needed. His visits to our home are still a delight. His favorite diversion must be searching the shelves of old book shops. He usually finds something that other collectors and dealers have overlooked.

Mr. John Kohn of Seven Gable Bookshop in New York and his wife were regular summer visitors. John's specialty seemed to be early American fiction and the shop usually had a shelf of it for his inspection. Another important dealer, who came once or twice a year and of whom we were very fond, was Ernie Wessen of Midland Rare Book Co., Mansfield, Ohio. Ernie's catalog, *Midland Notes,* is a collectors' item for the amazing and accurate bibliographical information it contains. He was a superb conversationalist and his great anecdotes of bookselling and book buying should be preserved, but I fear that Ernie never recorded them.

Another interesting and frequent visitor to our shop was Professor A. McKinley (Pete) Terhune of the Syracuse University English Department. He is an authority on *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* and the poet translator Edward Fitzgerald and has written a definitive biography of Fitzgerald. One day when Pete Terhune was in the shop another customer stopped in – rather a rough-appearing man who was a truck driver, dressed in his work clothes. He greeted us by exclaiming, "That was a great book you sold me last week! My wife and kids are crazy about it. Just the kind of book we want for our little library. I'll be glad to buy more of the same kind. I hope I pronounce it right: *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam."* Of course he was introduced to Professor Terhune, the great authority on Omar and Fitzgerald. Pete was perhaps a bit stunned by this incident because after the customer had left Pete asked, "Is that the type of customer who buys poetry and English literature?" Assured that many of our best book buyers were truck drivers or men in humble circumstances, Pete said, "Have I got something to tell my students when I get back to the university!"

Among the regular and frequent callers was the elderly rector of the stone church up the street. He was a great reader and lover of books and as a result of his reading his sermons were the best we ever heard, full of literary and historical references and little theology. The rector and the cat became great friends. He approved of the cat's name, Flurette, because it was so appropriate and reminded him of cute little French girls. How an Episcopalian rector would know about cute little French girls we couldn't quite understand. But he did speak French and after he retired and moved away he wrote a letter in French addressed to Mlle. Flurette, Window Apartment, Old Book Shop, Skaneateles, New York. We bought his fine library and noticed inside the back cover of each book the date it had been read. One book had been read sixteen times in a twenty-year period! It was not a scholarly book but a most amusing social satire by E. N. Benson, one of the three gifted sons of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was *Miss Mapp,* (1923) and is now difficult to find. (Benson continued with a series using many of the same characters and the books are all hilariously funny.)

A woman came in the shop one day and asked if there were any books with lavender bindings for sale. I thought a minute and said that I had a few, but wondered what type of literature she wanted. "Oh!" she said, "I don't care what they are so long as they are lavender to go with my newly decorated bedroom. They would look so nice on the table." So we found four or five books by Myrtle Reed with such titles as *Lavender and Old Lace, Old Gold and Silver, The Master's Violin,* etc., "all bound in lavender cloth, lettered in gold and silver, gilt tops, other edges untrimmed, printed on excellent paper and in perfect condition. No pornography in these and no four-letter words and all could meet with the approval of the Christian Endeavor Society, the W.C.T.U., and the Holy Name Society." After this little sales talk the woman seemed much pleased with her purchase. (A few years later when her effects were sold we repurchased Myrtle Reed.)

People often wonder where we find our rare books, so without giving away many trade secrets I'll give a couple of examples of our book purchases.

One night when we were reading in bed, as usual, I said to my wife, "I'm reading the biography of Thomas Bailey Aldrich in which he states that when he was a young chap shortly after the Civil War, he used to visit a large home a few miles south of Auburn, New York. His hosts used to row him across Owasco Lake to another large old home called 'Willowbrook.' Here he was shown a large old library with the most amazing collection of rare books: old black-letter printing, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth century books, literature, history, philosophy, Americana, early explorations of America by Europeans, and first editions which included all of J. Fenimore Cooper except *The Spy.* There were no rebound books and all were in at least respectable condition for their age."

My wife said, "Maybe the books are still there. We could find out as I have a friend that lives right next door."

So the next day we drove over and met the caretaker of Willowbrook. He was very helpful and was pleased to show the library. The books were all there just as T. B. Aldrich described them. The caretaker thought the family might soon wish to dispose of the books and gave us the name and address of the lawyer in New York who took care of the business for the heirs.

We wrote at once and received a reply that the books would be sold and naming a price, which was somewhat unusual as most sellers want an offer. The price seemed high, but we decided we would never again have such an opportunity to handle such rare items, so we sent a certified check to the lawyer and received notice that the books were ours. Our check had beaten an historical society check by just one hour. We made at least ten trips to cart the books home and place them in our large shelved room in the basement of the house. It would require weeks of work examining the books and pricing them.

One of the most interesting items was a leather-bound diary written by the wife of an army officer who was sent to New Mexico to protect early

settlers from hostile Indian tribes. She traveled across the plains in a hospital wagon and took part in several battles and nursed the wounded. She became a friend of the noted scout Kit Carson and recorded many of their conversations. She entertained General Sherman on one of his inspection trips and listed the elaborate menu served in their tent. It seems the General lacked many of the social graces usually looked for in hosts. The diary is now owned by the library of one of our large western universities.

"It never rains but it pours" is an old saying. That same week we bought another library of fifteen thousand books through the trust officer of a bank. These we hired a truckman to transport and stored them in an old carriage house barn that we rented for the purpose. These books had belonged to a gentleman with several university degrees who had never had to work and so spent his life in study. The older books and standard classics were nicely bound in leather, the modern books were in mint condition in dust wrappers, and there was no fiction.

In Skaneateles today we know of but two fine libraries. One has been formed by Mr. Norwin Hoffman, a Syracuse University graduate, who has been our good friend and steady customer for many years. While covering many fields, his library is particularly strong in Orientalia. The other notable collection belongs to Mr. Weir Stewart and is a scholarly library of literature, classics, history, philosophy, theology, and the best of reference works.

Life in a bookshop is not all books and literature. I should mention the art exhibits by local artists held on the lawn in front of the shop and luncheons and picnics on our patio back of the house and shop. (Flurette, our cat, was in her element on such occasions and had a good chance to increase the number of her friends and acquaintances.)

Sometimes it would be necessary to close the shop for a few hours when we went book hunting. At such times we would put our little sign on the door stating, "Will return shortly." Even when we were gone several weeks in Europe the sign would remain on the door.

Now enough time has been spent on reminiscences. We are ready again to close up shop after putting our sign on the front door.

WILL RETURN SHORTLY

Post Script Shortly after Mr. Edward Lavery took over the old shop for his law office a woman rushed in and said, "Where are all the books?"

"Why, this is no longer a bookshop but a law office," Mr. Lavery replied.

"That's just the trouble with the country today," said the woman. "There are too many law offices and not enough old book shops."

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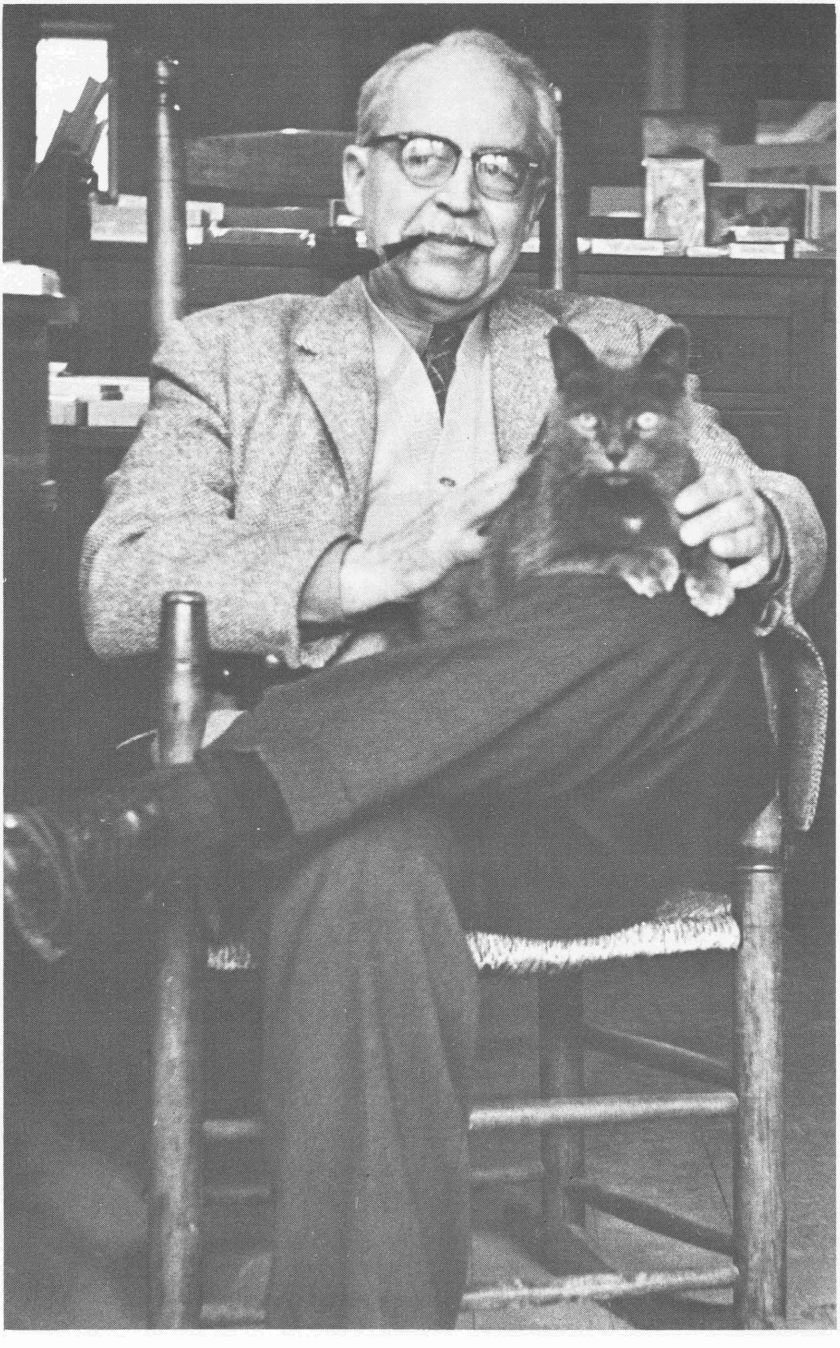

Mr. Roderick Benton and Flurette

The Wolcott Shop opened in its original location as one of the first two tenants in the White Memorial Building in Syracuse, New York, in 1881. The founder was Mr. Clarence E. Wolcott, whose original store was modeled after the studio of Sir Walter Scott and had an upper balcony of books above the main floor. It brought a little bit of Abbotsford and its "Laird" to Syracuse and a tradition for fine books that set this store apart and endured through all of its days. Mr. Wolcott was a great bookman in the old tradition. He was widely known among book lovers and in the trade. He was the first president of the American Booksellers' Association.

In 1921 Mr. Wolcott moved his store from Syracuse to Skaneateles where it was located in a small white frame building next door to the Skaneateles Library Association. The shop was a cozy place with a trimmed hedge in front. Two large mullioned windows looked out upon the street and gave a hint of the treasures to be found within. Books filled the shelves from floor to ceiling and spilled over onto tables everywhere in the shop. A nook in the rear held a desk, a chair in which a comfortable grey cat could usually be found, some shelves holding special books and a large pot-bellied stove that radiated its warmth throughout the place and lent a glow to the enjoyment of browsing along the shelves.

Mr. Wolcott was succeeded by his stepson, Mr. Roderick Benton, who conducted the shop's business until 1971 when it was finally closed. For those of us who were fortunate enough to know the Wolcott Shop during its Skaneateles days, it was a very special place. More than any other institution along Genesee Street, it bestowed a charm that somehow made Skaneateles different. The Wolcott Shop typified a graciousness and a way of life that is too quickly growing rare. It called to mind Chrisopher Morley's Haunted Bookshop *and visiting there was an experience we shall not soon forget. Nostalgic memories remain with those of us who discovered its treasures. There will always be a warm feeling in our hearts for "Vi" and "Rod" Benton whose vision and taste remained true to the founder's traditions and made the Wolcott Shop what it was. Its closing has marked the passing of something unique. We are all richer for having known the Bentons and the Wolcott Shop, and we cannot help feeling a sadness that it is no more.*

Henry S. Bannister

News of the Library and Library Associates

Fall Meeting and Luncheon

The Board of Trustees of Library Associates met on October 25 preceding the luncheon. Committee reports indicated that membership donations have remained steady, but continuing efforts to enlarge the membership and donations are necessary.

An Acquisitions Committee and a Development Committee were added to the list of standing committees. The Acquisitions Committee was directed to purchase a special gift for the Syracuse University Libraries, expenditure not to exceed $1,000.00.

The Faculty Advisory Committee and Acquisitions Committee will work closely with the library directors to develop an acquisitions policy for purchases by Library Associates.

The revised Library Associates' Constitution was approved.

The meeting adjourned to the 1916 Room, Bird Library, for luncheon. The planned purchase was announced to the members and immediately eight members pledged contributions toward the purchase.

The speaker for the luncheon was Mr. Robert Nikirk, librarian of the Grolier Club Library. His talk, "Ninety Years at the Grolier Club" was accompanied by slide photographs showing the Grolier Club as it grew and changed quarters. There were pictures of the interesting and valuable items in the collection.

Mr. Nikirk came to Syracuse from New York City as the guest of the Reverend and Mrs. Benjamin J. Lake.

Trustee Wins Award

Mr. Richard G. Case, a member of Library Associates' Board of Trustees, for the third time has won an award in the New York State Associated Press Association's annual News Writing Contest. Mr. Case is a writer for the *Syracuse Herald-Journal* and won second place in the feature category for newspapers with a circulation of over 75,000. His story expressed the mood of the community and the campus at the sudden closing of Cazenovia College, a school near Syracuse, New York, in 1974.

An Outstanding Event

Library Associates joined with the Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, in exhibiting original paintings, drawings, and posters by Maxfield Parrish. The exhibit also included first editions of L. Frank Baum's *Mother Goose in Prose,* which Parrish illustrated, and other items from Parrish's hand. Mr. Coy Ludwig, author of a recent book on Parrish spoke at the opening reception at the museum. Mr. Ludwig is director of the Tyler Art Gallery at the State University of New York, Oswego campus, and a member of Library Associates.

Network Affiliation

Library users at Syracuse University have access to three million additional books now that the university has become a full member of the Center for Research Libraries, a non-profit organization whose purpose is to increase library materials available for research to its members. There are one hundred twenty-nine affiliated universities, and the center's collections, based in Chicago, serve as a vast supplement to the members' library holdings.

Syracuse University libraries have also been connected since July 1974, with the resources of the State University of New York's Biomedical Communication Network, giving researchers access to the Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System, the most comprehensive online retrieval system for biomedical literature in the world; to the Educational Resources Information Center; and to Psychological Abstracts, a computerized version of the publication of the same name.

New Appointments

Among the new appointees to the library staff at Syracuse University two are of special interest to Library Associates members. Mr. Gregory Bullard has been named assistant director of libraries for processing and computer based operations. He came to Syracuse via Champlain College, Vermont, and State University of New York at Binghamton. He has been a member of the Five Associated University Libraries technical services committee since 1967. (The latter is a cooperative resources group formed by State University of New York at Binghamton and at Buffalo, Cornell University, the University of Rochester, and Syracuse University.)

Mr. David Rich has been appointed rare book bibliographer at the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections. He is a graduate of Oxford University and was a cataloger at the Bodleian Library and at St. Andrews University library. He worked in Special Collections at Brown University library before coming to Syracuse University.

Outstanding Gifts to the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections

From Chancellor Emeritus William Pearson Tolley

In October 1974, the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections received another generous gift from Chancellor Emeritus William Pearson Tolley. Of the thirty-nine items donated, thirty-five are Kipling titles, which include English and American first editions of *Kim,* two different limited editions of *The Five Nations,* and the scarce first American edition of *Soldiers Three.*

The four non-Kipling items are equally noteworthy: an 1843 volume of *Graham's Magazine* containing articles by James Fenimore Cooper, William Cullen Bryant, Edgar Allan Poe, and poetry by James Russell Lowell and Elizabeth Barrett (Browning); the first complete printed edition of the Gettysburg address, found on page 40 of Edward Everett's *Oration Delivered at Gettysburg* . . . 1863; William Rawley's *Resuscitatio, or Bringing into Publick Light Severall Pieces of the Works . . .of Francis Bacon* . . .1657.

Most notable, however, of Chancellor Tolley's gifts is Samuel Johnson's *The Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language; Addressed to the Right Honourable Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield* . . .1747. This is the first edition of the *Plan*; it is a quarto, the later issue in the same year appearing in octavo with the erratum on the verso of the quarto's titlepage corrected. In his *Bibliography of Johnson,* William Courtney notes:

> The scheme of the Dictionary was first mentioned to Johnson by Robert Dodsley, on whose suggestion the *Plan* was addressed to Lord Chesterfield. It apparently passed through several hands before reaching Lord Chesterfield. Mr. Croker had seen the draft which contained the remarks of his lordship and of another person: 'Johnson adopted all these suggestions.' . . . The only person drawn by the *Plan* into helping Johnson was Zachary Pearce, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, who sent him twenty etymologies. (William Prideaux Courtney, *Bibliography of Johnson;* in *Oxford Historical and Literary Studies,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1915, Vol. 4, p. 20.)

Syracuse University is most fortunate in having such a consistently generous friend of the Libraries as Chancellor Emeritus Tolley.

David S. Zeidberg*

*Mr. Zeidberg is the rare book processor for the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections. He is working toward a Master's degree from the School of Information Studies and a Doctorate from the English Department at Syracuse University.

A Very Special Edition

Mr. John Mayfield, whose skills as a rare book discoverer and collector are almost legendary, has turned his imagination to creating "firsts" of his own. In the last issue of *The Courier* his miniature edition of his newly discovered unpublished poem by Swinburne was noted. Now, in his new book, *Swinburneiana: A Gallimaufry of Bits and Pieces About Algernon Charles Swinburne,* Mr. Mayfield has used his fingerprint to certify the limited edition of five hundred copies instead of signing it as is usually done. This is probably unique in the history of publishing, and, of course, Mr. Mayfield has thereby already greatly increased the book's value. Moreover, all profits from sales will be donated to Syracuse University Library Associates.

The book was printed by the new Waring Press, Gaithersburg, Maryland, and is available there, and also from Jenkins Co., Austin, Texas and Fuller d'Arch Smith Ltd., London.

Frederick R. Lear Papers

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Mowry of Syracuse, New York, have given the papers of her father, the late Professor Frederick R. Lear, to the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections at Syracuse University. Professor Lear was on the faculty of the Syracuse University School of Architecture. The gift includes his journals, architectural drawings, and examples of paper sculpture made by Professor Lear. The sculpture was used most effectively to enhance the recent display of science-fiction manuscripts and first editions at the library, where the white paper human and geometric figures contributed to the special quality of the exhibit.